

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell again called for fiscal restraint today and warned against wasteful government spending as the fiscal year (FY) 2010 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill, which increased Congress' budget by 6 percent, received final approval in Congress and was signed into law this week.

"Now is not the time for Congress to be increasing its own budget, especially when other governmental entities, including our cities and towns, are cutting back or going without," said Mitchell. "During these difficult economic times it is more important than ever that Congress be more prudent and responsible for the way it spends taxpayer money. Families across the country are tightening their belts. Congress should have done the same."

Mitchell voted against the Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill in June and against it again last week when presented in the form of a conference report.

The \$4.7 billion FY 2010 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill increases spending 6 percent. This increase comes on the heels last year's increase which boosted FY 2009 spending by 11 percent over the FY 2008 levels. Mitchell voted against the FY08 and FY 09 Legislative Branch spending measures.

Specifically, the FY2010 bill increases the operating budget for the U.S. House of Representatives by 5 percent, following last year's 10 percent increase as well as increases for leadership offices in the Senate and the House. It includes a 14 percent increase for the Architect of the Capitol in FY 2010, which follows a 28 percent increase from last year, which funded projects like the Capitol Visitors Center -- completed 4 four years late and \$300 million over budget.

Earlier this year Mitchell led a successful effort to stop a 2010 pay raise for members of Congress. Mitchell teamed with Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, to introduce H.R. 156, the Stop the Congressional Pay Raise Act. Mitchell and Paul had also introduced similar legislation last year to block the 2009 pay raise, and Mitchell had offered a similar bill in 2007 to block the 2008 pay raise.

When Congress has refused to stop its own pay raise, Mitchell has donated his raise to Arizona charities.